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## **BERLIN SITUATION**

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Berlin Draft

## THE BERLIN SITUATION

### I. Introduction

Berlin today presents a classic dilemma both for the Western Allies and the Russians themselves. It is at once an intolerable situation -- a world capital isolated and, in effect, cut in half -- and a situation which must be tolerated because there is no way apparent by which it can be remedied.

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## II. West Berlin's Economic Dependence

West Berlin survives at all only by a huge economic umbilical cord to the West. To sustain life, its 2,160,000 inhabitants must count on the West for over 90 percent of their consumer goods and raw materials; and many of these imports can be paid for only by loans or grants-in-aid from the Federal Republic or the United States. Over the past three years such aid has reached a total equivalent to \$900,000,000. more than half of it financed by Bonn.\*

Before the War, West Berliners--like the 1,180,000 East Berliners today--got most of their food from the present Soviet Zone, which now supplies them with little but sugar, potatoes and rye. Meat, fats and wheat must come from West Germany. Industrial raw materials--steel, non-ferrous metals, and hard coal--must also come from the West, though some lignite is obtained from East Germany.

Normally, West Berlin imports about 15,000 tons of goods a day, 14,000 of these from West Germany and elsewhere in Western Europe. On a subsistence basis it would need an estimated 5,000 tons daily of food, fuel and other essentials.

\* To bring West Berlin closer to paying its own way, Bonn's and MSA's economic experts have advocated a long-range program to obtain more orders in the West for the city's industries and at the same time modernize and expand these industries to improve their competitive position. West Berlin's industrial facilities now operate at some 80 percent of capacity and unemployment figures fluctuate around 25 percent.

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### III. How the Berlin Situation Arose

The agreements governing the Allied and Soviet occupation of Berlin go back to a decision of the European Advisory Commission\* on 12 September 1944 and to the Four Power Statement of 5 June 1945. The Allied Komandatura for Berlin was provided for in the latter document. The United States, on several occasions since 1948, has also claimed that the Western Powers' rights in Berlin are theirs simply by the defeat of Germany, and that the four power agreements merely define these rights in some detail.

Theoretically, Berlin as a whole is still under quadripartite control, and all four powers take considerable care to preserve this fiction. In practice, West Berlin is controlled by the three Western Commandants, East Berlin by the Soviet Control Commission. Since the Soviet representative ceased to participate in June 1948, the Komandatura has consisted only of the Western commandants. However, the Western Allies maintain that it is still the same body set up in 1945, and that the Russians are welcome to return when they wish,

Following the breakdown of the Four Power Komandatura, the German municipal administration was also split. Both the West Berlin and East Berlin governments still claim jurisdiction over the whole city. Under its 1950 Constitution West Berlin is also a "Land" or state; but it is not part of the Federal Republic, nor will it be under the Contractual Agree-

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ment. In fact, the Contracts do not change the status of Berlin, but instead preserve the rights of the Western Allies there. East Berlin is not yet incorporated in the German Democratic Republic, although it is the East German capital.

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#### IV. The Access Agreements

West Berlin's imports come mostly by rail but also by road and canal. Air transport, used for some West Berlin exports but not for normal imports, is significant as a passenger service and for emergency use. At present, a reverse airlift is evacuating thousands of refugees to West Germany.

The Western Powers contend that the 1944 agreement of the European Advisory Commission and the Four Power Statement of 5 June 1945 imply the right of free access to Berlin; that this right was directly specified in the Truman-Stalin letters of 14 and 18 June 1945, relating to the withdrawal of American forces from Saxony and Thuringia; and that it has been confirmed by long usage.

The various modes of access have enjoyed differing degrees of quadripartite guarantee. The Allied Control Council in September 1945 approved 16 Allied freight trains daily to Berlin via Helmstedt. No written agreements cover the use of roads, though by a 1945 oral understanding, the US agreed to restrict the movement of its vehicles to the Autobahn through Helmstedt. There are no written agreements on the canals.

Air access for Allied military aircraft in the three air corridors was formally approved by the Allied Control Council on 30 November 1945. Nothing was said about commercial planes, and the Soviet authorities have since argued many times that the 1945 approval did not extend to them.

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Since November 1952, the Soviet authorities in Berlin have challenged the validity of some of the air corridor regulations promulgated by the quadripartite Berlin Air Directorate. They contend that these rules were never approved by the Allied Control Council or the Coordinating Committee under it.

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V. The Blockade of 1948-49

The first major crisis for the Western position in Berlin came in the blockade of 1948-49, when the USSR did not challenge Allied air access to the city but closed off all other modes of access. The blockade was imposed gradually from April on and was complete by late June, the Russians alleging that the reasons for the blockade were "technical difficulties" in transport, and the West German currency reform, which was announced on 18 June.

The Allies imposed a counterblockade on shipments to East Germany, and were able to stop the movement of East German barges and trains through Berlin. This latter retaliation would not be effective in the future as the East Germans have since constructed both rail and canal by-passes around West Berlin.

Having failed to squeeze the Allies out of Berlin, the Russians lifted the blockade on 12 May 1949.

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# VI. The West's Present Access to Berlin

At the present time, freight and passenger traffic by rail from West Germany to West Berlin is relatively unfet-  
tered. The route through Helmstedt is the main line. On it run 13 German freight trains a day, two German passenger trains, and three or four Allied passenger trains. On the other five lines, three of which converge half way to Berlin, there are four German passenger trains daily and a few freight trains.

There are three roads open from the Federal Republic to Berlin aside from the Autobahn through Helmstedt, but the last is by far the most important, both for the Germans and the Allies. German trucks are subject to inspection at the interzonal border, a process what is frequently arduous and lengthy. Since last May, British and American MPs have been forbidden to patrol the road to offer assistance to Allied travellers, although wreckers may be sent out.

The principal canal route between West Germany and West Berlin--the Mittelland Canal--has been lost to Western barge-men since last August, when the Rothensee shiplift was closed for what seem to have been needed repairs. The shiplift, however, has never been reopened. Western barges use the alternate route--the Elbe River.

Only Allied planes, military and commercial, use the air corridors, usually without incident. The corridors lie in close proximity to various Soviet airfields, however, and in

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the past year Russian planes have occasionally buzzed Allied  
craft, in one instance shooting and damaging a French air-  
liner, and in another shooting past a US ambulance plane. In  
most cases, the Western planes have been inadvertently off  
their course.

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VII. Stockpiling

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In preparation for a possible reimposition of the Berlin blockade, the Allied Foreign Minister formally inaugurated a stockpiling program in September 1950, and by late 1952 a six-months' supply of basic foodstuffs, fuels, medical items and some raw materials had been established in West Berlin.

On 10 December 1952, the Allied High Commissioners approached Chancellor Adenauer with a new "staggered" program which would provide for twelve months' supply of all essential materials, assuming an airlift capacity of far less than the 8,000 tons a day carried at the height of the 1949 blockade. The new program concentrates on cheap bulky items such as grain and coal, the latter having the highest priority since, by weight, coal requirements under the new system are seven times those for any other commodity. The cost to the Federal Government for its fiscal year 1953-54 would be approximately 100 million dollars, but the problem of financing this has not yet been solved.

The new program is already almost 90 percent complete in the solid fuels category and about half complete for bulky foodstuffs like flour, cereals and sugar. Certain industrial raw materials are far short of the goal. Allied planners hope, however, that all the new targets will be reached by the end of the summer, and possibly by July if the East German canal system becomes fully available for Allied use.

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### VIII. The West Berlin Public Utilities

Berlin's gas, water, electric power and automatic telephone facilities now operate independently in the East and West sectors. In some few areas compensation exchanges remain in force for water, as they do also for gas; but West Berlin's water comes largely from deep wells, which are invulnerable to East German action.

The sewage system does continue to function as a unit. In June 1952, the Allies feared that the East German Government would cut the system, forcing West Berlin to dump its sewage into the Berlin lakes. Reliable intelligence sources reported~~y~~ shortly thereafter, however, that the East Berlin city government was equally apprehensive of a similar Western action, since splitting the system would create a health hazard in the Soviet Zone north of the city.

Of the public transportation systems, the bus and street car lines have already been separated by the East Berliners, with no very serious consequences for the Western sectors. The subway remains so far undisturbed and, if split, could probably function effectively in the Western part of the city.

The elevated system is now in process of being split, East Berlin stations being so modified as to allow trains to run to the sector boundary where all passengers will be checked before being allowed to board another train going

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into West Berlin. The splitting of the elevated presents a special problem in that it is the property of the East German Railways; hence, any attempt by West Berliners to operate their segments of line themselves might serve as a pretext to East German Railway officials for restricting train service between the city and West Germany. Indications are that these officials will continue for the time being to operate the West Berlin parts of the elevated, using antiquated equipment.

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**IX. Significant Developments Since May 1952**

The root of West Berlin's recent intensified difficulties seems to lie in the signing of the Bonn and Paris treaties by the West German Government late last May. The East German Government was publicly committed to some retaliatory action for the signing and, in addition, faced the two objective facts that German unification was now clearly unlikely, and that the "building of socialism" in East Germany could proceed effectively only if this area were further insulated from the West. This insulation began immediately with establishment of security zones along the border facing West Germany, and subsequent steps to seal off West Berlin were a logical extension of the process.

All three main categories of Berlin developments since May are, indeed, connected in one way or another with the signing of the treaties. These major developments include the general harassing measures directed against the city; the problems created by the recent flood of refugees fleeing East Germany; and the varied Communist moves to insulate West Berlin from the rest of the city and from the Soviet Zone without denying it access to West Germany.

The harassing measures against the city in late May were incidental to the closing of the interzonal frontier. Eighteen of the city's 25 long distance telephone connections were immediately cut, and West Berliners were prohibited from visiting their farms in the Soviet Zone. In November, East Ger-

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man Railway officials began placing restrictions on all West Berliners' travel to East Germany. There have also been various kidnappings and temporary seizures of West Berlin automobiles venturing into East Berlin.

In the period since the May treaty signing some 120,000 refugees from East Germany have entered West Berlin; and the flow has been particularly heavy from late December on, running at over 1,000 a day during the first half of February. Incentives to flee have included food shortages resulting from the poor harvest, fear of conscription for labor service or military duty in the generally anticipated East German army, and the apprehension that West German ratification of the treaties will be followed by a complete severing of contacts between East and West Germany.

The influx has severely overtaxed the 70-odd temporary camps in West Berlin where the refugees await air transport to the Bonn government's reception centers. Evacuation has been slow, mainly because some West German states have not accepted their full quota. This problem was eased somewhat at a 6 February conference between Bonn and West Berlin representatives who agreed that 30,000 refugees would be evacuated monthly and given adequate housing.

The Communist moves to isolate West Berlin locally fall into an ordered pattern, apparently designed to curtail West Berliners' contact with East Germans and reduce the city's effectiveness as a base for Western propaganda and intelli-

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gence activities. East German action has been along the main  
line of progressively sealing off West Berlin's boundaries,  
which are of three distinct kinds.

First is the border between West Berlin and East Ger-  
many. Since last May this has been virtually closed to local  
traffic, although the three through roads to West Germany are  
still open. Barriers seal off the other streets, and barbed  
wire has been strung in some sections.

Second is the inter-sector boundary between West and East  
Berlin, which bisects many streets and even individual houses.  
Until February, little had been done to hinder traffic here.  
Most of the 103 streets crossing this boundary are still open,  
including 26 of the 66 main streets. However, early in Febru-  
ary, sharp "dips" were put in 26 streets, forcing cars to slow  
down for police inspection. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] has declared that a barrier will eventually  
be erected through the center of the city. Guards are al-  
ready attempting to halt East German escapees.

The third border is that between East Berlin and the So-  
viet Zone. Unconfirmed reports state that all roads on this  
boundary will be closed except six main highways, on which  
control points will be established. Other reports state that  
the ultimate intent is to establish a dead zone entirely around  
the perimeter of the city.



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Certain East German administrative actions have also contributed to the general fear of a split in the city. Late in January, the East Berlin city government was reorganized along the lines of district government throughout East Germany, thus suggesting that East Berlin might soon be incorporated into the East German Republic. East Berlin labor officials also began to register all eastern sector inhabitants employed in West Berlin, and all West Berliners employed in East Berlin. This move was interpreted as heralding a wholesale discharge of the 43,000 West Berliners who worked in the Communist sector.

The refugee situation is also a probable factor in Communist moves to seal off West Berlin, since these mass escapes are not only embarrassing to the East German Government but also mean the loss of needed workers and a deterioration in morale among those remaining. For these reasons, American officials in Berlin in mid-January felt for the first time that a complete splitting of the city might even precede the West German ratification of the treaties.

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**X. Military Forces in and around Berlin**

The Allies face any future Communist moves in Berlin with very little force at their disposal locally. There is no doubt that West Berlin could not be held overnight against Soviet and East German military action.

Against an approximate total of 8,000 Western combat troops in the city,\* some 37,000 Soviet troops are garrisoned there, with large additional forces available on short notice from the 405,000 stationed in East Germany.

The regular West Berlin police force of about 14,000 men, armed mostly with revolvers, has been augmented by an emergency unit for large scale disturbances which currently consists of about 1,500 men under training since last May with automatic rifles, mortars and bazookas. These various West Berlin units face the regular East Berlin police of about 10,000 men, many armed with machine guns, and the so-called Garrisoned People's Police, which is a 100,000-man army distributed throughout East Germany with its headquarters in Berlin.

\* The Western forces, aside from about 3,000 miscellaneous auxiliary troops, include:

- One reinforced US infantry regiment of 4,000;
- Three British infantry battalions and a half Squadron of tanks, totalling 2,000;
- One French reinforced infantry battalion and one armored car regiment, totalling 2,000.

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The ~~sent~~ source of the West's strength in Berlin is indicated by the announcement made by the three Western Foreign Ministers on 19 September 1950, and repeated in May 1952, that they would treat an armed attack on West Berlin from any quarter as an attack on themselves. This statement was pointed at the possibility that East German armed forces, instead of Soviet, might be used in order to "localize" any action. The Big Three Powers also circulated among the NATO countries a confidential memorandum in which they agreed to hold the USSR responsible for actions of the East Germans.

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# XI. Prospective Developments

The expulsion of the Western Powers from Berlin will remain a basic Soviet objective.

At the present time, however, the USSR and East Germany appear to be engaged in a primarily defensive insulation of West Berlin, involving a progressive reduction in the number of crossing points and the rigid control of traffic through them. The apparent purpose is to stop the embarrassingly large flow of refugees and drastically curtail the contacts of West Berliners with the East Germans, thereby putting a brake on Western propaganda and intelligence activities.

It seems quite likely that upon German ratification of the Bonn and Paris treaties, the USSR or the East German Government will swing from this "defensive" insulation over to aggressive harassment of West Berlin. A multitude of moves can be made to interfere with access to West Germany.

While another blockade is possible--and the idea of imposing one as <sup>2</sup>a permanent feature may have some appeal for the Communist leaders--the odds are estimated to be less than even that the Kremlin will impose one during 1953. Experience has shown that the Allies cannot be ejected by a blockade that does not affect the air corridors. Although Technical interference with communications or Soviet air maneuvers in the corridors could reduce Allied flying, to stop it altogether would probably require the direct use of force.

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CIA believes that the Kremlin estimates that the use of force in the Berlin area by either Soviet or East German units would be met by force on the part of the Western Powers. Though the danger of war over Berlin will remain great, CIA considers that in pursuit of its Berlin objectives the Kremlin will avoid courses of action, at least through 1953, which it believes would involve great risk of war.

For this reason, it is possible that the USSR or the East German Government will now adopt the legalistic approach of arguing that ratification of the Bonn and Paris treaties means the end of the occupation in West Germany and hence of the Allies' legal right to remain in Berlin.

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